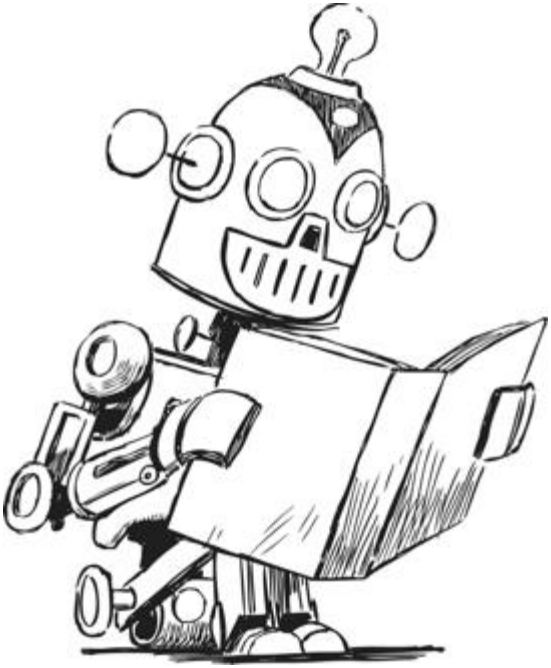
Novacon 49



8th-10th November 2019

Read Me

Friday

19:00 **Opening Ceremony**
Meet Guest of Honour Mike Carey and the entire Novacon 49 committee, and find out what the weekend has in store.

19:30 **Desert Island Books**
Guest of Honour Mike Carey tells us about the books he would like to be washed up on a desert island with, and why. Eve Harvey helps to steer his reminiscences.

21:00 **A Celebration of Mike Carey's Work**
A chance to meet our guest in a less formal setting. There will be wine and nibbles – please imbibe responsibly.

22:30 **Competitive Whingeing Open Mic**
Come along and have a whinge about what's going wrong in your world. Fierce members of the committee will be on hand to call time on dull contributors and enforce the Code of Conduct.

Saturday

10:00 **Science Talk: Dark Energy in the Laboratory**
An exciting theory of dark energy is the hypothetical chameleon particle, which has a rather curious property: its mass is not fixed, but rather varies depending on its surroundings. But chameleons, if they exist, cannot hide forever: a host of ingenious laboratory measurements are currently being performed to try to detect them. The hunt is on! Dr Benjamin Elder, University of Nottingham

11:30 **Two SFF Librarians**
25 years ago, a slimmer and hairier Andy Sawyer set forth as librarian of the Science Fiction Foundation Collection at Liverpool University Library, and Arthur C. Clarke was awarded the first Honorary Degree ever conferred by satellite link. Andy will recall those nervous moments waiting for the links between Sri Lanka and Liverpool to actually connect, his favourite book from the collection, and other memories, and will talk about sf with his successor Phoenix Alexander.

13:00 **YA - Not Just For Kids**
Once upon a time there was no YA, just children's and adult's books. The panel will discuss some of the reasons why the term YA arose, what it encompasses, and how useful or otherwise it might be for authors and readers.

They will also discuss the perception versus the reality of what YA is, why there might be prejudice against it and where they see YA developing in the future.

14:30 <u>Mike Carey and Garry Kilworth in Conversation</u>
Garry and Mike talk about the short story form - its place in their own fiction, its relation to other media, their favourites and their approaches. They will also introduce their recent short story collections, and read short passages from recent work.

16:00 <u>To the Stars – on a Paintbrush!</u>
It is just about twenty years since the first planets were detected orbiting another star — 'exoplanets', as they have become known. Obviously, it is impossible to photograph them, so it is down to the artist to give us some idea of what they might look like, and what sort of conditions future star-travellers may expect to find. Hardy was one of the first artists to attempt to depict exoplanets; he also shows the vehicles which might take us there.

17:30 <u>How Fandom Turns Fans Into Pros</u>
One could argue that our kind of SF Fandom makes fans become pros in a way which other fandoms (romance novels? football?) don't. Why and how does that happen? What else does our fandom do that others don't? Is it changing?

19:00 <u>Poetry Open Mic</u>
We promised the poets this item would run; if you like to hear poetry, this could be fun. It need not be all science-fictional verse. It need not be lengthy; it need not be terse. It need not have rhyme, or a metre, or form, but in Douglas's writing it seems that's the norm. If you write it, then bring it: a mic is available (we can't say if what you hear here will be saleable).

20:30 <u>Muddling Through – A Very British Dystopia, part 1</u>
A team-based workshop – what makes a dystopia? Are we in one now? How do we survive them, personally and as a society? Our facilitator has been busy watching and reading dystopian fiction and fake news and has lots of tricksy questions.

22:00 <u>Dave Hick's Hovel of Games</u>
A science fiction themed tribute to Richard Osman's *House of Games* hosted by Dave in the refined, sophisticated style you've come to expect from late night Novacon game shows. Specially selected witty and intellectual people recoiled in horror when asked to participate until Dave showed them the compromising pictures. As usual, we will also keep a score for the audience who usually win. Extra points for extreme pedantry.

Sunday

10:00 Science talk: The Mysterious Pull of Dark Matter
Although we cannot pinpoint the exact nature of Dark Matter, we know a remarkable amount about its properties. And most incredible of all, we can actually use it to probe deeper into the universe than ever before. Dr Rachael Livermore, Imperial College

11:30 Working With Artists
What do editors and publishers do in order to find or commission the art they want? How do they combine it with other work from writers, designers and so on? What challenges are there in communicating with artists, and are there differences in communication styles? And what could they do better from the artists' point of view? How important is the artist to the finished product – the cover of a novel, the artwork in a comic?

13:00 Muddling Through – A Very British Dystopia, part 2
A panel – with feedback from the earlier workshop, practical suggestions, and a reading / watching list.

14:30 Art Auction
A chance to buy more stuff. You know you want to. The more you pay, the better your favourite artist will feel and the longer they'll be able to keep working.

16:00 Clanger Cuisine
Another chance to hear a Serious Scientific Talk from Satellite Six, in which we hear about the work of the soup dragon, discover the restorative power of blue string pudding, and explore what we might infer about the local biology.

17:30 Handover Ceremony
We wrap up matters for the current year, thank those who made it happen, and discover the results of the raffle. The Novacon 50 team is announced, and plans for the future are revealed.

19:00 The traditional Novacon Beer Tasting
Bring three bottles of interesting and unusual beer to Registration to get a badge which qualifies you for participation, or cough up the required fee.

19:30 The Novacon Banquet
Tickets are available at Registration. A chance to sit down and eat with your fellow fans and to tell each other about the bits of the convention they missed. Cost £16
Remember to get a beer badge and buy a food ticket from Registration.

OFF-PISTE

Off-piste items are downstairs, either in the bar area or in Room Four.

As usual, there will be special items not on the main programme. We will post those as and when we know about them. Keep an eye on the notice board near reception. We do have some things planned in advance such as:

Art Show

The Art Show is in Room Three. It is open Saturday 10:00-18:00 and Sunday 10:00-12:30. No food or drink in the Art Show room please. The Art Auction is in the Main Programme on Sunday.

Dave Lally's Programme

In addition to the highlights on the preceding pages, the Dave Lally Programme will run from Friday afternoon through to Sunday afternoon. Head down the stairs and look for a second flipchart, and the entrance to the Lally programme will be nearby.

Book Auction.

If there are enough Books, there will be an Auction late on Saturday evening.

Dealers' Room

The Dealers' Room is in the Churchill Room, through the glass doors on your left as you head from the main bar towards Reception. It will be open Friday 16:00-17:30, Saturday 10:00-14:30 and 16:00-18:00, and Sunday 10:00-16:00. No food or drink in the Dealers' Room, please, unless you're a dealer.

Charity Raffle

Throughout the convention we will be running a raffle in aid of Charity. Tickets! Buy some.

Sunday Evening Beer Tasting and Food

As in previous years, Novacon is hosting a beer-tasting event and a meal. We are providing some beer, but we rely on members to bring more interesting stuff. Bring three bottles of interesting beer to registration, and we will give you a beer badge which gives you access to the beer tasting. Alternatively, you can buy a beer badge at registration for £6.

Beer tasting starts at 19:00 in the Churchill Room (the former Dealers' Room).

The meal is served at 19:30 in the same room, and at the request of our GoH will feature Indian food. Access to food is by ticket only; this year the cost is £16. Beer badges and food tickets are available from Registration. Assorted soft drinks will be available free to everyone during the beer/food.

YOU MUST BUY YOUR FOOD TICKET BY 11:00 ON SUNDAY MORNING.

Duty Committee Member

Throughout the convention, one committee member will be acting as Duty Committee Member, and will be identified as such by their gold waistcoat. If for any reason there is something that the convention Needs To Sort Out, then your first port of call is the Duty Committee Member.

Volunteering and Rewards

The convention works because everyone involved gives their time for free. You can offer to help and we will be very pleased to make use of your services. We might ask you to help move furniture around between one programme item and the next; we might ask you to carry some stuff from one part of the hotel to another; we might simply ask you to go and find someone for us.

We call people who help us out in this way "gophers". We like gophers. A lot. Sometimes we will offer gophers special rewards, tokens which you can use to get beer or food. Sometimes you can spend them in the dealers' room. These **G**opher **R**eward **T**okens are called **GR**oa**T**s.

Outside the Hotel

Across the main road outside the hotel you'll find a cashpoint and assorted shops including a newsagent and a supermarket with basic medicines. For an actual pharmacy ask Reception for directions to Boots half a mile away.

Food and Drink

All convention food will be served in the main bar area on the ground floor. Food orders placed at the bar are cooked to order, so there may be a wait. Please remain in the bar until you've got your food.

The **bar** will be open on Friday and Saturday **until 02:00** depending on demand. **Bacon, Sausage or Chip Butties** will be available from 23:00 Crisps, nuts, chocolate bars and baguettes are available from the bar from 10:00-23:00.

The regular bar menu will also be available throughout the weekend. If you want a sit-down meal in the restaurant using the regular hotel menu on Saturday, you'll want to reserve a table as it can get busy.

Breakfast on Friday and Monday is from **0630 – 0930**. On Saturday and Sunday it is from **0700 - 1100**.

Code of Conduct

The full Code of Conduct appears in the Programme book and on the wall near registration, where you can find out how to contact the Code of Conduct team.

Bar Menu 2019
Served from 10am -10pm

Soup & Roll ***£3.25***
Baguettes ***£3.75***
Sandwiches ***£3.50***
Fillings:
Ham & Cheese/ Cheese & Onion Mayo/ Tuna Mayo/ Egg Mayo
Panini ***£6.95***
See blackboard for fillings

Pizza ***£7.50***
Please choose a topping.
Margherita, Picante or Romana Blanco e Funghi

Cajun Spiced Chicken Burger & Chips ***£7.95***

Cheeseburger & Chips ***£7.95***

Chicken Tikka Masala with Rice ***£7.95***

Fish, Chips & Mushy Peas ***£7.95***

Jacket Potato and choice of 2 fillings ***£6.50***
Coleslaw, Cheese, Baked beans, Chilli, Tuna Mayo,

Side Orders

Chunky Chips Skinny Fries* Rocket & Parmesan Salad**
Seasonal Vegetables
£2.50 each
Cheesy Chips Garlic Bread*
£3.95 each

Novacon 49 Programme

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	10:00	Dark Energy in the Laboratory	10:00	The Mysterious Pull of Dark Matter
			10:30	
	11:00		11:00	
	11:30	Two SFF Librarians	11:30	Working with Artists
	12:00		12:00	
	12:30		12:30	
	13:00	YA – Not Just For Kids	13:00	Muddling Through Part 2: Panel
	13:30		13:30	
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	14:30	Mike Carey and Garry Kilworth in conversation	14:30	Art Auction
	15:00		15:00	
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	16:00	To the Stars – on a Paintbrush!	16:00	Clanger Cuisine
	16:30		16:30	
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	17:30	How Fandom turns Fans into Pros	17:30	Handover Ceremony
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	23:00		23:00	